



Remote Teaching and Learning Policy

Introduction

In response to this time of uncertainty regarding school closures, we have formulated this policy to outline how the school will maintain the link between school and home. In the event of another whole or partial school closure, we aim to continue to communicate with our pupils through various means.

We recognise that online safety is of huge importance and the aim of this document is to help to protect both school staff and pupils, while teaching and learning online.

This policy does not set out to replace our Mobile Phone or Acceptable Usage Policy. Rather, it is proposed as an important addition to the area of learning from a digital platform. The policy presented here should be read also in tandem with our school's Code of Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying (including Cyber Bullying) Policy.

The primary obligation of all schools is to the welfare of the learners in their school. This policy, therefore, seeks to ensure that remote learning is safe for all student learners and that personal and sensitive data is also protected under GDPR legislation. Schools must ensure that learning takes place in an environment that is respectful and fair and meets its statutory duties.

This Policy has been formulated in accordance with the provisions of the Department of Education and relevant sections of:

- a) The Education Act (1998)
- b) Education (Welfare) Act (2000)
- c) Equal Status Act (2000)
- d) Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (2004)
- e) Disability Act (2005)
- f) Children First Act (2017)
- g) GDPR
- h) Data Protection Act (2018)
- i) Department of Education: Child Protection Procedures for Primary schools
- j) NEWB Guidelines for Developing a Code of Behaviour (2008).
- k) DES Guidance on Continuity of Schooling for Primary Schools (May 2020)
- l) DES Guidance on Continuity of Schooling: *Supporting Primary Pupils at very High Risk to Covid 19* (August 2020).
- m) Guidance on Remote Learning in a COVID-19 Context: September – December 2020

- n) Circular 74/2020
- o) Updated Guidance on Continuity of Schooling – Jan 2021

This is a working document. As we continue to explore options available to support distance learning, the document will be updated accordingly.

Context

Teaching and Learning is always evolving, especially, as we move deeper into the 21st century. Developments in IT provide us all with great opportunities as learners and teachers. Never before has there been greater scope to learn using technology and it continues to change the learning relationship between teachers and students. Advances in technology mean that assignments can be delivered remotely and that greater access to information on the internet affords the opportunities for real learning to take place under the watchful and professional guidance of the teacher. However, whether a child is being directed remotely or via a traditional classroom environment, it is very important that all partners are aware that once a learning exchange takes place between a student and teacher, whether at home or school, the same statutory rules apply i.e. the school's Code of Positive Behaviour and all of the school's policies apply.

We recognise that online collaboration is essential for distance learning and that families are in favour of increased opportunities to maintain the connection between school and home. Convent Primary School, Killaloe uses a variety of child friendly, online tools, which assist in providing more effective teaching and learning, while also enabling greater communication between staff, families, and students.

Guidelines for good online communication

1. Staff, families and students are expected to behave in an appropriate, safe, respectful and kind manner online and adhere to the guidelines and protocols circulated to all members of the school community via Aladdin.
2. Under no circumstances should pictures or recordings be taken of video calls.
3. It is the duty of parents/guardians to supervise children while they are working online and to ensure that any content submitted to their teacher is appropriate.
4. Staff members will communicate with pupils and their families via text and/or e-mail. Other established apps (e.g. Seesaw) may be used if and when deemed suitable by the teacher. Students and staff will communicate only using tools which have been approved by the school and of which parents have been notified.
5. Any electronic forms of communication will be for educational purposes and to allow for communication with families.
6. Parental permission will be acquired before setting up a profile for a pupil on a communication forum and if/when using live zoom calls.
7. For security reasons, passwords will be provided to families, where applicable.
8. Convent Primary School, Killaloe cannot accept responsibility for the security of online platforms, in the event that they are compromised.

Media which will be primarily used by the school:

E-mail

Each teacher will communicate with parents/guardians and pupils via their professional e-mail and vice-versa. Parental queries will be addressed during school hours and should relate strictly to your child's teaching and learning.

Seesaw App

Each teacher will communicate with parents/guardians and pupil via this app. Work will be assigned to the pupils on the app and a two-way process of teaching and learning will be maintained daily

Rules for pupils using online communication

For submitting learning:

1. Submit work and pictures that are appropriate - have an adult take a look at your work before you send it.
2. Submit during regular daily working hours.
3. Use kind and friendly words.

For video calls:

1. Pictures or recordings of the video call are not allowed.
2. Remember our school rules - they are still in place, even online.
3. Set up your device in a quiet space, with no distractions in the background.
4. Join the video with your microphone muted.
5. Raise your hand before speaking, just like you would do in class.
6. If you have the chance to talk, speak in your normal voice, using kind and friendly words.
7. Show respect by listening to others while they are speaking.
8. Ensure that you are dressed appropriately for the video call.
9. Be on time - set a reminder if it helps.
10. Enjoy! Don't forget to wave hello to everyone when you join!

Guidelines for parents and guardians

For learning

1. It is the responsibility of parents and guardians to ensure that pupils are supervised while they work online.
2. Check over the work which pupils send to their teacher, ensuring it is appropriate.
3. Continue to revise online safety measures with pupils.

For video calls

1. Under no circumstances should pictures or recordings be taken of video calls.
2. Ensure that the school has the correct email address for inviting you to join apps and meetings.
3. The main purpose of a video call is to engage in online learning activities while maintaining a social connection between the school staff and pupils. Encourage pupils to listen and enjoy the experience.
4. Be aware that when participating in group video calls, you can be seen and heard unless you are muted or have disabled your camera.
5. Make sure to familiarise your child with the software in advance. For video in particular, show them how to mute/unmute and turn the camera on/off.
6. Participants in the call should be dressed appropriately.
7. An appropriate background/room should be chosen for the video call.

Any breach of the above guidelines will result in a discontinuation of this method of communication. It may also result in a person being immediately removed from a meeting or a meeting being terminated.

Remote Teaching and Learning Protocols for Pupils

1. Check assigned work each school day
2. Communication may only take place during normal school / working hours
3. The normal school calendar will apply
4. The following school policies apply to remote teaching and learning:
 - a. Code of Behaviour
 - b. Anti- Bullying Policy
 - c. Acceptable Use Policy
5. Teaching and Learning best practice will continue to apply, with students expected to present all assignments to the best of their ability and on time, where possible in this evolving and unprecedented situation.
 - a. In so far as possible, provision for SEN students will be made when using Remote Learning methodologies.
 - b. In so far as possible, provision for student at very high-risk to Covid 19 will be made when using Remote Learning methodologies.

Remote Teaching and Learning Protocols for Parents

1. We ask parents/guardians to ensure protocols for students are adhered to.
2. Check-in on their child's school work on a daily basis and talk to their child about the work being assigned.
3. The health and wellbeing of all is paramount. Circumstances may change for any of us unexpectedly, teachers or parents, so please keep schooling in perspective and do not allow anything school related to impinge on your child negatively. You are the primary educator of your

child and you make those calls. We encourage a little work every week day for routine. We provide work and guidance and ask parents and pupils to do their best and that is all.

Remote Teaching and Learning Protocols for Teachers/SNAs

1. Check uploaded work daily
2. Communication may only take place during normal school hours
3. The normal school calendar will apply
4. The following school policies apply to remote teaching and learning:
 - a. Child Protection Policy
 - b. Data Protection Policy
5. Teaching and Learning best practice will continue to apply with students expected to present all assignments to the best of their ability and on time, where possible. Relevant feedback will be provided by the class teacher and the Special Education Teacher on an ongoing basis.

Remote Teaching and Learning Provision specifically for the following Covid 19 related scenarios

A. Provision for children who are at very high risk to Covid 19:

The school will engage directly with relevant parents, regarding remote educational provision for children who are deemed to be at **very high risk** to Covid-19 (see HSE Guidelines) where medical certification has been provided to the school.

B. Provision for all other children who are instructed to self-isolate or restrict their movements by their GP or HSE Public Health, educational provision will be provided as follows:

1. Children who are awaiting Covid 19 test results for themselves or a family member and have been instructed by their GP to isolate at home for a few days.

These pupils will be supported to catch up on their learning on their return to school. If a staff member feels a particular child might be in need of additional support for a particular reason, an arrangement specific to that child might be put in place.

2. Children isolating at home on instruction from their GP due to a confirmed case within their own family/close contact outside of school (14-day isolation period).

The pupil is expected to engage with Google Classroom and follow, complete and submit all assignments given to the class. Throughout the isolation period, a teacher will link in with the pupil via e-mail and by phone to update the child, offer motivation and social interaction and give feedback on work submitted.

Arrangements can be made for books required at home to be collected from the school / delivered by the school

If the pupil isolating is receiving learning support, the Special Education Teacher will assign and correct work sent electronically in collaboration with the class teacher. The SET will link in with the pupil via seesaw, e-mail, zoom and/or by phone. The SET may need to reduce time allocated to the affected child's class.

Children receiving SNA support will be offered regular contact from their SNA who will provide assistance and encouragement and offer a further social contact with the school.

3. a) School POD (group of six) instructed by HSE Public Health to self-isolate. Teacher in school.

As above (#2)

b) School POD (group of six) instructed by HSE Public Health to self-isolate/ teacher isolating.

Where the teacher is self-isolating also, they will prepare the work for the pod using Google Classroom and Google Meet. They will check in with the pod on a daily basis to offer social contact and motivation. A substitute teacher will teach the remaining pod groups within the class.

c) Where the teacher at home is on sick leave

The Special Education Team will provide the instructional activities for the pod using the time allocated to the class in question.

4. School bubble (whole class) instructed by HSE Public Health to self-isolate (14 day isolation period).

The class teacher will be required to provide remote/distance teaching to all the pupils in the class using the school's digital platforms or other agreed method as needed.

Children receiving SNA support will be offered regular contact from their SNA who will provide encouragement and assistance and offer a further social contact with the school.

5. Whole school closure as instructed by HSE Public Health (duration of closure will be advised by Public Health)

Teachers will engage with pupils, using a blended approach.

Where pupils are in receipt of learning support, the Special Education Teacher will assign and correct work sent electronically in collaboration with the class teacher. The SET will link in with the pupil via zoom, e-mail and by phone.

Children receiving SNA support will be offered regular contact from their SNA who will provide assistance and encouragement and offer a further social contact with the school.

6. A teacher / number of teachers in the school are advised to self-isolate or restrict their movements

If the teacher's class group is still attending school, a substitute teacher will be sought to cover that teacher's teaching responsibilities in the school for the period in question. The teacher restricting their movements will support the work of the school in developing and delivering its programmes of teaching and learning for pupils as per Section 12 of Circular 0049/2020

Please note that the current situation is quite fluid and these circumstances may vary throughout the year.

1. Summary:

1. Please keep abreast of postings on seesaw– it is our main mode of communication going forward.
2. Be guided by the work set by your child’s teacher/s. Families are only expected to do what they can, given their particular set of circumstances. We place great value on talking to your child and reading for them and with them as well as encouraging them to read independently.
3. There will be no school work set for planned school closures/holidays. There will be no interaction on Seesaw during these times.
4. We ask parents/guardians, students and teachers to ensure protocols are adhered to at all times.
5. If you are experiencing difficulties please email the school and we will assist you in any way that we can and please contact the school with any further queries you may have.

We thank the school community for adhering to the above guidelines for everyone’s safety and welfare.

This plan was ratified by the BOM of **Convent Primary School, Killaloe** at its meeting on:

_____ and is subject to change, in light of any guidance or instruction received from Department of Education and Skills/HSE Public Health.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Chairperson BOM

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Principal

Recommended Apps

In addition to a pared back plan of work for your child/children, we suggest the following Apps for your child's use too, if you can access them. If not, do not worry, they are helpful but not essential.

- Cúla 4: Excellent for younger pupils for Irish vocab – very child friendly. There are also videos of your children's favourite cartoons here as Gaeilge which would be useful to watch occasionally to keep up with Irish.
- Doulingo: most suitable from 2nd class upwards. Excellent app. Tests your child Irish ability level at the start and they work away at their own level for 10mins daily.
- Mathduel: For tables. Fun and interactive.
- Starfall: For spellings. Again, very child friendly and useful to keep spellings progressing without feeling like schoolwork.
- Jolly Phonics App: to keep up phonics learning for infant classes.
- Dolch words Apps (there is a wide range available): for the development of sight words.
- Nessy Apps: for reading for pupils with dyslexia or difficulties.
- PinkFong: Digital stories for infant classes. Excellent and engaging.
- Khan Academy: Useful for maths for older pupils especially.
- Kahoot: for general knowledge and quizzes.
- Toontastic: probably the best app ever for digital storytelling – pupils can devise their own digital story, picking a range of characters, settings, even musical background. They plan a beginning, middle and end to their story and can record their own voices to tell the story.
- Puppetpals: similar to toontastic – useful for younger pupils. They can record themselves telling the story also.
- Lightbot – Coding app – super for all ages.